

# Bluefin tuna

Bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*), also known as Atlantic bluefin tuna, is one of the largest predatory fish in the North Sea (Fromentin & Powers, 2005). A fully grown individual can reach lengths over three meters and have a bodyweight of more than 900kg (Fromentin & Powers, 2005). Within

the North Sea, Bluefin tuna are almost exclusively found in the most Northern parts of Norway, with some recent sightings in the Skagerrak-Kattegat areas (Bennema, 2017).



## History/ Population trends

From the start of the 20th century, the landings of the northern European tuna fishery increased from almost zero tons to thousands of tons, after the Second World War (Bennema, 2017; Tiews, 1978). About 20 years afterwards, tuna fishing collapsed in this area, and since then the numbers of tuna in the North Sea are low (Bennema, 2017; Fromentin, 2009; Tiews, 1978). Various hypotheses have been postulated to explain the disappearance of the tuna in the 1960's. Tiews observed that tuna of intermediate sizes had gradually disappeared before the collapse (1978). Tiews concluded that the lack of recruitment year classes led to the disappearance of tuna from the North Sea and Kattegat, and that the decline of bluefin tuna was not caused by overfishing in the central North Sea (1978). Recent analyses by Fromentin demonstrate that intensive fishing during spawning migration in southern Europe, alongside intensive fishing of juveniles in the Bay of Biscay, led to this lack of recruitment (2009). Contrary to Tiews (1978), Fromentin (2009) also concluded that local overfishing played a role in the sudden decrease of Bluefin tuna in northwest Europe.

## Miscellaneous

- Bluefin tuna are in the same family as Mackerel (*Scomber scombrus*) and Herring (*Clupea harengus*) (Ahmed et al., 2018).
- The largest Bluefin tuna ever caught was caught near Nova Scotia in Canada (*Heaviest Tuna Fish*, 2007). It was almost 700kg, and this was after the fish had lost some weight due to the dehydration that occurs when catching tuna for commercial purposes.

## Diet

- Cephalopods (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Cod (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Whiting (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Mackerel (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Herring (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Sprat (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Sandeel (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Crustaceans (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)
- Other pelagic active hunters (Estrada et al., 2005; Olafsdottir et al., 2016)

## Sources

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